



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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Pat Quinn, Governor
Marc Miller, Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 3, 2011

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Illinois Department of Natural Resources Newsbits

Highlighting IDNR programs and events for the month of May

Flood-Related Closures: A number of IDNR facilities are closed or have limited access as a result of flooding or recent storm-related damage in southern Illinois and elsewhere along the state's waterways and major reservoirs. Visitors are encouraged to check the IDNR website for updated closure information before planning a visit to any IDNR facility. The website link is available at www.dnr.illinois.gov/closures.

Illini State Park: The campgrounds at Illini State Park in LaSalle County are closed effective May 1 due to problems with the site's wastewater treatment system. An emergency system will be installed as soon as possible which should allow the campgrounds to reopen later this month. In the meantime, individuals with camping reservations for Illini State Park should contact the ReserveAmerica online campsite reservation system at www.reserveamerica.com or the Illini State Park office at (815) 795-2448 for refund information. The closure also affects the restroom building and concession building.

Invasive Species Awareness: Governor Pat Quinn has declared May as "Invasive Species Awareness Month" in Illinois. The proclamation encourages all Illinoisans to learn about ways in which they can help combat the spread of animal and plant species that endanger the Illinois landscape. Examples of invasive species of concern in Illinois range from autumn olive, garlic mustard and kudzu – to emerald ash borer, gypsy moth and soybean aphid – to Asian carp, zebra mussels and wild boar. Learn more by checking the website at <http://www.invasive.org/illinois/>.

OutdoorIllinois: The cover of the **May 2011** issue of the IDNR monthly magazine *OutdoorIllinois* features silver carp, one of the species of Asian carp found in the Illinois River, which are the focus of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, a national program to restore the ecological health of the Great Lakes. This edition of *OutdoorIllinois* features articles about some of the invasive species found in the Prairie State and efforts under way to control their spread. In addition to the update on Asian carp, this month you can learn about increases in sport fish recreational opportunities, how releasing bait can impact our aquatic ecosystems, the fish virus Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia, aerial surveys for bush honeysuckle and more. We don't stop there, the May issue also includes articles on combating exotic species on your property and how to get involved with organizations

working to curb the spread of these invasive species. For a summary of feature magazine articles, listen in on monthly podcasts at www.dnr.state.il.us/OI. *OutdoorIllinois* is a great tool for learning about Illinois' natural, cultural and recreational resources and a bargain at only \$15 for a one-year, 12-issue magazine subscription that includes an information-packed annual calendar in the December issue. Visit www.dnr.state.il.us/OI or call 1-800-720-3249 to subscribe. VISA and MasterCard are accepted. For information on advertising in *OutdoorIllinois*, call (217) 785-8610 or e-mail michelle.silver@illinois.gov.

Free Fishing Days: The 2011 Illinois **Free Fishing Days** are scheduled for **June 10-13**. For more information on fishing in Illinois, check out the 2011 Illinois Fishing Information guide at <http://www.ifishillinois.org/pdf/2011fishingguide.pdf>.

Annual Deer Harvest Summaries: The IDNR Division of Wildlife Resources' Forest Wildlife Program prepares annual reports summarizing the Illinois deer season. Reports for the 2005-2006 deer season through the 2009-2010 deer season are now available at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/deer/Pages/AnnualDeerHarvestReports.aspx>.

Beavers in Illinois: A new publication – *Population Ecology of Beavers in Illinois* – is now available on the IDNR website. Authors Thomas Nelson and Clayton Nielsen share findings of studies conducted in the east-central and southern parts of the state from 1999-2008. Beavers were common in Illinois when the first Europeans settled here. By 1850, beavers were rare because of unregulated trapping, habitat loss and harvest by Native Americans for food. Conservation efforts helped their numbers rebound over the course of the next century. Find the publication at this link:
http://www.dnr.state.il.us/orc/wildlife/virtual_news/pdf/Beavers_in_Illinois.pdf

Online Free Site Hunting Permits – East Central Illinois Sites: Hunters are reminded that free site hunting permits (windshield cards) to hunt upland, forest game and waterfowl at east-central Illinois IDNR sites are now available at www.dnr.illinois.gov. Navigate to “Hunting/Trapping” and then “Public Hunting Areas” to print these permits. Hunters are also encouraged to view the link to hunter fact sheets. Watch the IDNR homepage link for new sites being added to this online service in 2011. For information or assistance, hunters should contact the site where they intend to hunt. For most species, hunters will be required to return to the IDNR website prior to February 15 each year to record harvest information.

Non-Resident Archery Deer Permits: The online lottery application period for non-resident Illinois archery combination deer permits for the 2011-2012 deer season will open on June 1. Non-resident hunters can apply for the lottery through DNR Direct Online License Sales. Click on the “Online Services” link on the IDNR home page at www.dnr.illinois.gov or call 1-888-6PERMIT (1-888-673-7648). Non-residents may apply for one combination archery permit per season. The cost of a non-resident archery combination deer permit (one either-sex/one antlerless) will be \$411. The quota will be 25,000 for non-resident combination tags. Antlerless-only archery permits will be available throughout the season over the counter at local license agents, by phone or through DNR Direct Online License Sales for \$25.50 each (if ordering by phone or online, the permit will be mailed within 7 to 10 business days). The upcoming Illinois archery deer season is Oct. 1, 2011-Jan. 15, 2012 (except closed in firearm deer counties on Nov. 18-20 and Dec. 1-4). For more information on Illinois deer hunting, check the IDNR web site at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/deer>.

Becoming an Outdoors Woman: The Illinois DNR will host a weekend full of fun and adventurous activities for women interested in learning outdoors skills during the annual Becoming an Outdoors Woman workshop. Instructors provide hands-on experience in a safe, non-competitive atmosphere for women interested in learning more about a full range of outdoors activities, including fishing, horseback riding, firearm safety, kayaking, basket making and outdoors survival. The BOW workshop is June 10-12 at the Lorado Taft Field Campus in Oregon, and the cost is \$200 per person. For registration and more information, go online to <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/Landmgt/Bow/index.htm>.

Oil and Gas Board: The Illinois Oil and Gas Advisory Board will meet on Wed., May 4 at 10 a.m. at the offices of the Illinois Oil and Gas Association, 824 E. Ill. Highway 15, Mt. Vernon. The meeting is open to the public. For more information, phone (217) 524-6570.

ESPB Meeting: The Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board will meet on Fri., May 13 at 10 a.m. at the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, 30239 S. State Route 53, Wilmington. The meeting is open to the public. For more information, call (217) 785-8687.

ISM Science Series: "Prehistoric Native American Copper Working in the Eastern Woodlands" is the topic of the next Illinois State Museum Science Series program on Wed., May 11 at 7 p.m. at the ISM Research and Collections Center, 1011 E. Ash, Springfield. The program will be presented by Dr. Kathleen L. Ehrhardt, ISM Adjunct Research Associate. The program is free and open to the public. For more information, phone (217) 782-0061.

Super Saturdays: The Illinois State Museum invites children to attend the monthly "Super Saturdays" program to learn "All About Birds" on Sat., May 14 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. At 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., stop by the museum auditorium for a special performance as John James Audubon, portrayed by Brian "Fox" Ellis, shares adventures from his first trek through Illinois. At 2:30 p.m., Ellis (as Mr. Audubon) will offer a special tour through the museum. The program is free. For more information, phone (217) 782-6044. The Illinois State Museum is located in the State Capitol Complex at 502 S. Spring St. in Springfield.

Wingshooting Clinics: The IDNR and participating partners sponsor wingshooting clinics at sites throughout Illinois to help improve the shooting skills of participants. Youth/Women's clinics are designed to teach participants basic firearm and hunter safety and the fundamentals of wingshooting. Hunter clinics are designed to enhance the wingshooting skills of hunters and provide sound wingshooting practice techniques. The clinics are conducted on weekends throughout the spring, summer and early fall. For a complete schedule, visit <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/programs/wingshooting/wingshootinghome.htm>

Upcoming clinics (and information phone numbers) include:

- May 14-15 – Youth/Women Wingshooting Clinic, Des Plaines SFWA (Will Co.), (217) 785-8129
- May 21-22 – Youth/Women Wingshooting Clinic, World Shooting and Recreational Complex (Randolph Co.), (618) 295-2700 ext. 1
- June 4-5 – Hunter Wingshooting Clinic, Des Plaines SFWA (Will Co.), (217) 785-8129

- June 11 – Youth/Women Wingshooting Clinic, Jim Edgar Panther Creek SFWA (Cass Co.), (217) 452-7741
- June 18-19 – Hunter Wingshooting Clinic, Briar Knoll Hunting and Fishing Club (Lee Co.), (815) 857-2320
- June 25-26 – Youth/Women Wingshooting Clinic, St. Charles Sportsmen's Club (Kane Co.), (630) 363-6180

CPOs: Did you know that Illinois Conservation Police Officers (CPOs) have full, statewide police powers, spending 160,000 man-hours annually protecting Illinoisans, many in underserved areas and on Illinois waters? CPOs are front-line disaster relief and search and rescue responders, members of the Illinois Terrorism Task Force, involved in Homeland Security efforts, drug prevention operations, and environmental enforcement throughout Illinois.

Give Us Your Best Shot: Get your camera ready and look through your photo album - it's time for the annual *OutdoorIllinois* photo contest. The 2011 contest is our 12th contest, and the February 2012 issue of *OutdoorIllinois*, where all winning images will be published, will be our eighth annual photographic issue. New this year is a special category celebrating how Illinoisans are returning to the basics and involving the children in their families in nature. Other categories include mammals, birds, invertebrates, other fauna (reptiles, amphibians, aquatic organisms), scenic/landscape, flora (plants, mushrooms), natural resource recreational activities and young shutterbugs (same categories as above but taken by persons 12 years of age or younger). The photo contest is open to all Illinois residents and entries are due by 5 p.m. Aug. 5, 2011. Contest guidelines are available in the May 2011 issue of *OutdoorIllinois* and are posted at www.dnr.state.il.us/OI.

Volunteers: Interested in volunteering at an IDNR site or on an IDNR project? Sign up to be part of the IDNR Volunteer Network. See the IDNR website for more details at <http://www.dnr.state.il.us/volunteer/index.htm>.

Follow the IDNR: Keep up to date with events and information on outdoor recreation and natural resources in Illinois through IDNR postings on Facebook and Twitter. Find us at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/about/Pages/SocialNetworking.aspx>.

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